



**Comments/ Questions to be answered from Council's
Neighborhood Listening 179 Corridor
September 22, 2010**

Comments:

Several citizens expressed support for National Scenic Area Designation.

Several citizens expressed that they felt the 179 corridor looks very nice now that it is mostly completed.

There should be more native trees planted along 179.

Interest in keeping the conversation open regarding weeds and native planted areas as time moves on and the weeds get worse or better.

Native trees should at least be planted in the roundabouts along 179. They require less maintenance and water than a bunch of smaller bushes.

New road is beautiful and sophisticated but the Sweet Cider Stand is very messy with the way that it is set up. It doesn't make a good impression and is a detriment to the road in its current state.

A lot of landscape and native vegetation has been removed along Mystic Hills area and it should be replaced. Mystic Hills has offered to do this but has run into complicated ADOT requirements such as environmental impact analysis and engineering plans.

ADOT said that the City could apply for Enhancement Funds to continue further landscaping and native plants along the 179 corridor.

The light near W. Chapel Road at the 179 roundabout is left on well past daylight and the timing should be adjusted.

Future maintenance concerns about remaining sections of cracked sidewalk along 179, that haven't been replaced.

With all the landscaping that was done, the area between the sidewalk and the curb is all weeds. This should be fixed.

The Chapel Area recently held a block party that was well attended and fun. It was a great community-building event and more areas in the City should consider holding one.

The Block Party permit process should be simplified so that residents have an easier time filling it out and it is more focused toward block parties, not more complicated uses.

The property owners of Mystic Hills and Indian Cliffs paid capacity fees and the developer paid to extend the sewer system including lines and pump stations to provide themselves sewer. They shouldn't be treated the same as every other area of the City who has had sewer provided by the City's funding and shouldn't be required to pay the same amount for capacity standby fee for sewer availability as other vacant lot owners.

Concerned that the state statutes require that a report be signed and sealed and the rate study wasn't and also the consultant wasn't licensed in the state.

Concerns that the City might not extend sewer to the remaining portions of the City that don't have sewer available.

Concerns that the City hasn't really met its obligation to sewer the City with ADEQ.

Several residents expressed that the City should do something to address the Indian Cliff roads because the heavy truck traffic went through that area to provide the construction in the Chapel Area. Perhaps the company that did the work should fix the problem.

Every area at the edge of the road through Indian Cliffs is deteriorated. This is especially true where the pavement meets the driveways. Crack sealing will not address the real issues. The pavement needs to be replaced.

The roads in Sky Mountain Ranch, especially the edges, are eroding. The City's street resurfacing plan is to do every road every 21 years. Expressed concerns that cars will drive off the road into the ditches and also that the drainage is impacted by the deterioration of the road edges. Lack of street markings and the deterioration of roadway impacts safety.

There should be more sidewalks built to connect West Sedona neighborhoods down to 89A. It isn't safe for people to walk on the sideroads like Coffee Pot and Mountain Shadows down to 89A.

Concerned that there may be a conflict between Sedona fire District encouragement of "Firewise" practices, Sedona city code against allowing new wood burning fireplaces and the recent announcement that the Fire District is allowing open burning permits.

In Sedona a large portion of the Development Impact Fees go to Parks and Recreation. For the majority of people parks aren't really impacted by development, so it would be prudent to look at moving the impact fees to other issues like streets for example.

There was a requirement for a status report on the ADU ordinance to go back to Council within 6 months of implementation. It should come back at a public meeting. Doesn't seem like many people are taking advantage of the ADU option.

Despite the City's Dark Sky Ordinance, many residences have spotlights that shine, or go off-and-on due to motion sensors all night long. Some just leave their porch lights on all night. They should be more sensitive to how the lights affect their neighbors and consider turning them off.

ADOT should have to do some improvements to 89A to bring the road up to standard if it is turned back to the City. The City should look at that.

A suggestion was made that, the crosswalks that have been painted near Tlaquepaque and in the 179 roundabouts in the business areas seem to be working. People walk, cars see the markings etc., we could reduce jaywalking and pedestrian accident problem in west Sedona significantly if the same thing was done.

Phoenix PD has a hotline that can be called to report a vehicle that has illegal emissions. The person reports descriptive information of the vehicle, where it was seen causing the problem, and the license plate number. The PD follows up, finds the property location of the vehicle and provides a fine. Sedona should provide a similar service.

It sounds like the primary focus for the Community Plan Update is going to be west Sedona redevelopment. But, one of the biggest issues in town is the traffic issue in Uptown, which is an enormous inconvenience for tourists and residents. Along 179 it is bad because it would be hard to get a safety vehicle here during a high traffic time.

The two lights in uptown is what destroys the traffic on weekends when people come from Phoenix. It can take 20 minutes to go a mile. Slide Rock folks can't get in because of all the traffic through Uptown. Perhaps a pedestrian overpass would help.

There is too much uncontrolled pedestrian crossing and they have their choice of crossing at too many areas. Solution is to reduce the number of crossings.

Perhaps an alternate route could be created by paving in a small two-lane road up Schnebly Hill Road to I-17.

Comments only made via comment card:

There is a huge barking dog problem in Indian Cliffs. The City has a barking dog ordinance and these residents should comply.

There is a massive red ant infestation along the new 179 sidewalks.

Questions

1. Who is responsible for maintaining the landscaping and natural vegetation along HWY 179?

A: There is a one year “establishment period” in the construction contract for the new SR 179 corridor. During that time the landscape contractor is responsible to replace vegetation that doesn’t survive. ADOT is required to maintain the area, however their maintenance budget has been cut drastically over the last few years. The City of Sedona will probably have to augment ADOT’s maintenance in year one depending on the level of maintenance anticipated by the public. After the establishment period, the City of Sedona is responsible for landscape maintenance.

2. Why aren’t there trees in every roundabout on 179?

A: The 179 landscape plan was approved by council in September 2006 with basic xeriscape included, limited planting outside of the business district (South of Canyon Road) and including the basic enhancements as included in the final construction of the project. This was a reduced landscape plan from the original scope. Reductions were made due to the exorbitant cost of the original plan.

3. Mystic Hills and Indian Cliffs paid for the extension of sewer through their development agreement. Why aren’t they exempt from the Capacity Standby Fee for having sewer available?

A: The costs the City are assessing to owners of undeveloped properties with sewer available bear no relation to the one-time “buy in” cost of the capacity fee that has already been paid in behalf of Mystic Hills property owners. This buy in cost, plus the donation of sewer infrastructure was the consideration given the City in the Public Sewer Extension Agreement with Mystic Hills. Nowhere in the agreement is there any language that contemplates that Mystic Hills property owners are not obligated to pay their fair share of costs for annual maintenance and depreciation.

As mentioned in the wastewater rate study prepared by CDM, the capacity standby fee “is based on the City’s costs for maintenance and depreciation on the facilities built and available to serve parcels that have delayed development and remain undeveloped. In this case, facilities built and available refers to wastewater collection sewers owned by the City and ready to be connected to a sewer lateral from a privately-owned parcel.”

In other words, in order for there to be available sewer system capacity for undeveloped properties like those in Mystic Hills sometime in the future, there are ongoing costs that must be met in terms of continued maintenance and future depreciation. Unlike the monthly sewer fee, the standby fee does not include operation costs. That makes sense since undeveloped properties are not adding to the daily treatment demands of the wastewater plant.

If owners of undeveloped properties including those in Mystic Hills are not required to pay their equivalent fair share of the costs of the city's sewer system, then that cost will continue to be borne solely by developed property owners. These owners are not receiving any benefit from the wastewater treatment system's excess capacity. And yet, in order for that excess capacity to be there when vacant property owners want to develop, the plant with its excess capacity must be maintained, and reserves for future depreciation and replacement must be created.

4. Has the City met its requirements for sewerage with ADEQ?

A: The City is no longer under the Consent Judgement that framed the City's obligations to ADEQ. We have met our obligations to ADEQ.

5. What is the City's plan for fixing the roads in Indian Cliffs?

A: Edge road deterioration is common throughout the City. The City will typically deal with this issue when a street is overlaid by providing a thicker edge. If the edge deterioration affects the travel width of the street prior to an overlay then an edge repair will be done (this includes the road edge at driveways if inspection results warrant repair). The City currently has plans to provide a crack seal of the Indian Cliffs area.

6. When will the roads in the Sky Mountain Ranch area be improved?

A: The City Maintenance Division will look at the roads in Sky Mountain Ranch. The roads in that area are narrow. If edge repairs are warranted then that will be done. In some cases edge markers may be the appropriate treatment. Typically, the City doesn't stripe streets with the travel density that Sky Mountain Ranch will have.

7. The roundabout light on 179 near W. Chapel is on well into daylight hours. Can it be turned off earlier?

A: This light, and the others on the 179 corridor are fitted with photo cells. When the sun hits the sensor in the photo cell, the light turns off. This allows for the light to stay on during inclement weather and to adjust for sunrise/sunset during different seasons.

8. Who pays the utility bill for the lights along 179?

A: The City is responsible for the electric costs for lighting on the 179 corridor.

9. Can the City apply for Enhancement Grants to replace more landscape/vegetation along the 179 corridor?

A: Much of the approved landscape and pedestrian lighting enhancements were provided through a prior enhancement grant that the City received (about \$900,000).

Any additions now would be an added cost to the City and outside the scope of the current project.

The City *could* apply for further enhancement funds for this project, but that cycle doesn't open again until next spring. Funding of an additional enhancement grant for the SR 179 corridor in the near-term may be impacted by the fact that the City has already received significant grant funds (competitive) for enhancements to that project - and projects state-wide compete for limited funds.

10. What is the process for an HOA or private homeowner to install landscape or to re-vegetate an area at their own cost?

A: An individual or group (HOA or the like) can add enhancements like landscaping in ADOT ROW by applying for a simple encroachment permit and funding the planting/installation/maintenance on their own.

Encroachment Permit guidelines and application are available at:
<http://www.azdot.gov/highways/districts/flagstaff/Permits.asp>

11. How can someone report cracked damaged sidewalks along 179?

A: Major cracking (not small cracks that are the result of settling and typical to sidewalks) during the construction were reported to ADOT and the construction contractor was required to rectify these prior to acceptance of the project. Once the project is complete, major cracks or damage should be reported to the City Maintenance Division at 928-204-7111.

12. Who will be responsible for the sidewalks along 179 once the project is complete?

A: The City will be responsible for ongoing maintenance of the sidewalks once the project is complete.

13. Is the non-landscaped strip between the curb and sidewalk along 179 on purpose, or is it incomplete?

A: The landscaped area of the 179 project enhancement includes “native hydroseed” in the dirt area between the sidewalk and the curb. The hydroseed mixture will create natural re-vegetation of the areas between the curb and private property South of Canyon Road. This was a design consideration when the project plans were approved in 2006.

14. What are the rules about how the Cider Stand is maintained? Can fencing be required in front of the boxes and trash etc.?

A: The use for the Oak Creek Orchards fruit stand was established in the early 1960s prior to the establishment of zoning in Sedona, and is therefore, a legal non-conforming use. Due to the fact that it is a legal non-conforming use, the City's options are limited to resolve the concerns related to the appearance of the area. Staff will approach the owner and discuss possible voluntary options for cleaning up the property.

15. When will the status report on ADU's be coming back to Council?

A: The Director has compiled a Report on the status of ADUs since its effective date (Feb 11, 2010) and the report was presented to Council and the Housing Commission on Oct 4, 2010 at their joint meeting. The Report is posted on the City's website at www.sedonaaz.gov/housing.

16. If there is a problem and there are spotlights that illuminate homes in residential areas – how do you get that changed?

A: The City's has a dark sky ordinance relating to lighting requirements in both residential and commercial areas. If a resident has concerns about a neighbors' lighting design or lighting practices the City's Code Enforcement Division should be contacted for further information. Contact Code Enforcement at 928-282-1154.

17. Can Sedona get a phone number for where to report a car if there is a car that is polluting?

A: Staff is looking into whether ADEQ will provide a contact number (similar to those provided in Phoenix and Tucson) for this type of reporting. The Phoenix and Tucson areas are mandated to provide reporting on air quality, but the Sedona area is not, and funding to support the mandated requirements also is not the same. The City does not have the staffing levels in its police or code enforcement offices to realistically respond to these types of reports, however ADEQ may.

18. The current Development Impact Fees allocate a very large portion of fees to Parks Development. Can the City change the allocation of Impact Fees to address more important infrastructure impacts from development like streets?

A: A moratorium on increases and changes to City Development Impact Fees (DIFs) was set by the State Legislature and runs through 2012. However, when the City does come back to update its DIF schedule, a new study will be required and a major component of that study will include a review of fee allocations. Adjustments necessary to meet changing capital infrastructure needs due to development impacts will be made at that time.

19. There is still significant traffic back-up in the Uptown area – particularly on holiday weekends. What can the City do to help with the traffic?

A: Over the past 24 months various changes have occurred in the area that impact traffic. The City has set the mid-block crossing light to blink yellow. The City has re-stripped the lanes approaching Forest from the South to allow for more stacking room. The police department has assigned an Uptown Liaison to review issues, like traffic, that impact the area. The Sedona Park Rangers have reported back on traffic issues. In addition, the SR 179 construction including the two roundabouts at SR 179/89A and Brewer/89A has been completed and is functioning. Ultimately, there is too much traffic for the size of road available through Uptown.

20. Does the City plan to look at traffic as part of the Community Plan?

A: There is currently a “circulation” (i.e. traffic) element included in the Community Plan. Circulation will continue to be an element in the community plan as it is a state required element of the plan. The goals and priorities within the circulation element specific to traffic will be shaped by community input on the community plan.

21. The City doesn’t allow Wood Burning stoves in the City Limits, but the Fire District is distributing “burn permits.” Is it legal to get a burn permit or does it violate City Code?

A: City codes prohibit new construction of indoor, open, wood burning fireplaces and the Fire Department regulates and issues burn permits. The City’s objective in prohibiting new wood burning fireplaces is to help reduce air pollution and there is a conflict between the City’s objective and the Fire Department’s burn permit allowance. This conflict has been noted, although the City has no control over the Fire District’s practice of allowing burn permits. It is not a violation of City Code if you receive a burn permit from the Fire District.

22. What is the City’s plan for adding sidewalks connecting West Sedona neighborhoods to 89A and how can a sidewalk construction project be requested?

A: A written request for the sidewalk should be sent to the Public Works Director or the City Manager. The request should describe the need for the project. Please provide a contact name and phone number. Also provide some indication of the neighborhood or other support for the project. The request will be evaluated along with other capital improvement requests during the budget process. Staff is proposing a sidewalk up Rodeo Road for the five-year capital plan. Prior pursuits for sidewalks up to West Sedona neighborhoods have failed largely due to the costs required to install sidewalks (which also requires significant drainage work) and the private property acquisitions needed (front yards). The past two grant funding requests have been denied.

23. Will the City continue to extend sewer to areas that are not yet sewerred, such as the Skyline Estates and Sky Mountain Ranch?

A: Future extensions of the City sewer system by the City will be the subject of a future Council discussion as part of its priority to: ***Formulate clear policies for construction of future extensions, cost recovery for extensions, and management strategies for the Wastewater Treatment System.*** This priority includes a goal for determining a timeline, cost structure, and communications strategy regarding future extensions of the sewer system

At the present time the City has no plans for a City-funded extension to Sky Mountain Ranch or other parts of the City.

The areas of Sedona that were mandated to be sewerred were completed by the year 2000. Sedona has continued to sewer other areas of the City since it completed the mandated areas. However, financially the City has paid for the extension of sewer lines primarily through subsidy from its sales taxes. The last extension of the sewer system cost the City between \$25,000 and \$30,000 per home and the capacity fee is currently approximately \$5,125. The proposed increase to the capacity fee would make the fee \$8,631 by July 1, 2013. The difference is made up from sales taxes.